of air services keeping in view the transportation facilities in North-Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of airports suitable for air services in North-Eastern States and the number of airports available there and the condition of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Alliance Air, a wholly owned subsidiary of Indian Airlines Ltd., has leased 4 ATR aircraft for improving connectivity in the North Eastern Region (NER). This project has been supported by a budgetary assistance of Rs. 35 crores per annum by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region through the North Eastern Council (NEC), for a five year period beginning with the financial year 2002-03. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Alliance Air and the NEC for this purpose. Alliance Air is presently operating 82 flights/week with ATR aircraft to 8 stations in North Eastern Region and carrying approximately 4000 passengers/week. After the introduction of ATR aircraft, the Indian Airlines/Alliance Air are connecting 11 stations in North-East Region.

(c) There are 20 airports and Civil Enclaves operated and maintained by AAI in the North East Region. Scheduled airlines are operating their services through Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Tezpur, Jorhat, Silchar and Lilabari in Assam, Imphal in Manipur, Dimapur in Nagaland, Shillong in Meghalaya, Lengpui in Mizoram and Agartala in Tripura.

Airports at Naharlagun (Itanagar), Zero, Tezu, Daporizo, Along and Passighat in Arunachal Pradesh and Kailashahar and Kamalpur in Tripura are being used for operating helicopter services.

The airports at Khowai in Tripura, Rupsi in Assam and Tura in Meghalaya are non-operational.

New Company Act

123. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are enacting a new Company Act incorporating the suggestions made by the J.J. Irani Committee wherein sweeping

changes are contemplated to make the new Company Act simpler and providing a single window clearance mechanism for mergers etc;

(b) if so, by when the proposed Bill will be introduced and whether views of the FICCI, CII and similar bodies will be duly taken into consideration; and

(c) whether the new Bill will also contain provisions so that minority interests are protected during mergers and takeovers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) to (c) the Government is considering comprehensive revision of the Companies Act, 1956 to enable the Indian corporate laws to keep pace with economic changes and growth in the country. To enable a broad based consultation on the issues involved by a wide range of stakeholders, a concept paper on Company Law was published on August 4, 2004. Thereafter, an Expert Committee headed by Dr. J J. Irani was appointed to make recommendations to the Government. This Expert Committee included representatives of FICCI, CII, etc in addition to other experts/professionals. The Committee submitted its report on 31st May, 2005 covering a wide range of issues including protection of minority interest during merger and acquisitions. The report of the Committee is on the website of the Ministry *www.dca.nic.in* and its recommendations are under examination. Proposals for amendment/ revision of the Companies Act, 1956 would be brought up for enactment at the appropriate time.

Restructuring of Competition Commission

124. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Competition Commission is being restructured vesting only non-judicial powers with the Panel;

(b) what will be the interests represented in the Commission;

(c) whether there will be an appellate body with adjudicatory functions; and

(d) what is the time-frame to bring about these structural changes?